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MINUTES
OF THE
FINANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2013
7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM
130 MAIN STREET, SANDWICH, MA

Present: Paul Sylvia, Ellen Yaffe, Gene Parini, Tom Hickey, Richard Reilly, Linell Grundman, Matthew Terry and

Absent: Mike Dwyer and Anne Dessertine

Also Present: George Dunham, Doug Lapp, Selectman Chairperson Jim Pierce, Financial Director Doreen Guild, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Richard Canfield; the Enterprise and SCT

ITEM #1
CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

ITEM #2
REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of Tuesday, October 15, 2013-

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PARINI TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 15, 2013 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. ELLEN VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

ITEM #3
TOWN MANAGER / FINANCE DIRECTOR REPORT

Mr. Dunham gave an overview of the fifteen articles on the November 18, 2013 Special Town Meeting Warrant. Article #1 (recommended by the Board of Selectmen and the Capital Improvement Planning Committee) - \$650,000 for constructing improvements and repairs to the Sandwich High School A Wing and for capital improvements associated with moving all 7th and 8th grades to Sandwich High School...said appropriation shall be contingent upon the passage of a so-called proposition two and one-half capital expenditure exclusion referendum in accordance with MGL c 59 sec. 21c (i ½), or take any other action relative thereto.

The Capital Improvement Planning Committee supports this article.

Mr. Dunham explained that this is a one-time charge which is different than a prop. 2 ½ override.

Ms. Yaffe would like to hear from Mr. Dunham and Mr. Lapp regarding the RFP that will be going out on this project to be reassured that we have not closed the doors on other alternatives.

Mr. Dunham noted that the schools are fully in charge of writing the RFP's and making the decisions.

Mr. Hickey – as Mr. Dunham noted...this is very common, not unusual at all; schools do this all the time in the Commonwealth.

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PARINI THAT THE FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMEND PASSAGE OF ARTICLE #1 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. GRUNDMAN.**

Discussion –

Ms. Yaffe asked if the door is closed on any other recommendations for the window sills' project that might cost less?

Dr. Canfield – we have a close relationship with the schools and Town Hall. We have a responsibility to be good care takers and spend money wisely. We will work with the Town on the way the RFP is written to make sure we get the best job for the least amount of money.

Ms. Grundman noted that she has an issue with using left over money from the window sills project for the STEM Academy project.

Ms. Yaffe – can the recommendation read up to \$650,000?

Mr. Dunham noted that it is a capital outlay. It has to be written as it is in the warrant. The money can be re-appropriated at another town meeting if it doesn't cost the full amount.

Mr. Parini – feels it would have been better to have had two separate articles. Estimates usually come in more, not less.

VOTE – UNANIMOUS

Article #2 - \$980,000 for constructing improvements and remodeling, constructing, reconstructing and making extraordinary repairs to the Sandwich high school pool and associated mechanical equipment located at 365 Quaker Meetinghouse Road...appropriation shall be contingent upon the passage of a so-called proposition two and one-half Capital Expenditure exclusion referendum in accordance with MGL c59, sec. 21c(i1/2) or take any other action relative thereto.

The Capital Improvement Planning Committee supports this article.

Mr. Reilly noted that there was a large amount of discussion on this article at last night's CIPC meeting.

Mr. Parini asked if there is a plan for the community to use the pool.

Ms. Yaffe – We should do what we have to do to make the pool functional again and somehow to make it available to the community. People could support it if it is open to the public.

Mr. Hickey agreed that it would be easier to sell to the public if the public would be able to use it also. Would like some reassurance from Mr. Dunham and Dr. Canfield that it will be available to the public at some point.

Dr. Canfield – Parents trust their 7th and 8th graders to the STEM Academy at the high school. We need the pool to meet the needs of the STEM program. Absolutely open to ideas of how we can open the pool to others in town.

The students are our top priority. The School Dept. needs the pool for 180 days a year. Evenings, weekends and during the summer we are open to that. We have to work together on the mechanism of how to open the pool to the general public.

Ms. Grundman – can the school contract out to someone to oversee the pool after school closes?

Dr. Canfield – We are open to exploring something like that.

Dr. Canfield noted that accreditation status will be received after the first of the year. If we don't succeed in taking care of this question we stand to lose the accreditation.

Ms. Grundman sees the pool as a great asset. We have the only pool on Cape Cod.

Dr. Canfield – many years ago we had over two hundred people who had signed up to take swimming lesson in the pool. Our priority is the K-12 but we will work with the town for use by the town in general. If this question is approved at Town Meeting, then it has to go to the ballot.

Ms. Grundman wants to see this pass...looking for a plan.

Mr. Terry – I couldn't be more for it. My fear is that if something like this goes away, it doesn't come back.

I think we need to take this opportunity to save the pool. The 'broken window' concept...if you fix them, it is one small thing, but it does make a difference. This is a one-time assessment to save a town asset for forty years.

Mr. Reilly asked what the average cost to a home owner is if the article passes?

Mr. Dunham - \$92.00 for a year spread out over four tax bills...comes out to about \$25 quarterly.

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PARINI TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ARTICLE #2 AS PRESENTED IN THE STM WARRANT. SECONDED BY MS. GRUNDMAN VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

Article #3 – to authorize a motor vehicle excise exemption for any motor vehicle owned and registered by a resident who is in active and full-time military service and has been deployed or stationed outside the territorial boundaries of the continental United States for a period of at least forty-five (45) days in the calendar year of the exemption, etc.

Mr. Dunham noted that it is up to the Board of Assessors to approve this request.

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. YAFFE TO RECOMMEND PASSAGE OF ARTICLE #3 AS PRESENTED IN THE STM WARRANT. SECONDED BY MS. GRUNDMAN VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

Articles #4, 5 and 6 do not need a recommendation from the Finance Committee.

Article #7 – to expand the purposes for which Community Preservation Act fund were appropriated for the Sandwich Housing Authority George Fernandez Way expansion project by the May 4, 2009 ATM under Article #18 to allow up to \$450,000 for the \$1,850,000 previously authorized to be used for the purpose of providing matching funds to preserve the existing units in the George Fernandez Way development, or take an action relative thereto.

Mr. Dunham noted that this article is supported by the Community Preservation Committee at their meeting in October.

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. YAFFE TO RECOMMEND PASSAGE OF ARTICLE #7 AS PRESENTED IN THE STM WARRANT. SECONDED BY MR. PARINI VOTE – UNANIMOUS**

Articles 8 – 12 are Zoning articles and do not have any financial implications.

Articles 13 & 14 are petition articles – not recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Mr. Dunham has spoken with Town Counsel, the Town Moderator and the Town Clerk regarding the preparation meeting for the STM which has been scheduled for Thursday, November 14, 2013 at 3:30 pm at Town Hall.

ITEM #4
COMMITTEE

Sub-Committee Reports-

Mr. Reilly – the Capital Improvement Planning Committee met Monday afternoon and discussed and voted to support Article #1 and 2 as previously mentioned.

Ms. Yaffe inquired about the \$300,000 to satisfy the money the town owes the former superintendent of schools. Mr. Dunham deferred to Town Counsel.

Mr. Parini – That would be a school or town funding?

Mr. Dunham – to be determined.

Mr. Hickey thanked that Finance Committee Chairman for not having a meeting on a ‘Red Sox’ playing night.

Future Meeting Schedule-

Mr. Sylvia noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 19...the night after the Special Town Meeting (Monday, November 18). It was agreed to cancel the meeting on November 19th - the next meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at 7 pm at the Town Hall unless one is needed before that.

Other-

Mr. Sylvia spoke briefly about Finance Committee e-mails and not replying to e-mails because some of the information should be discussed at a posted Finance Committee meeting.

ITEM #6
ADJOURN

8:15 p.m.

***MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY MS. GRUNDMAN. SECONDED BY MR. PARINI VOTE – UNANIMOUS.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane M. Hanelt, Secretary

Approved: _____

Supporting Documents:

Warrant for November 18, 2013 Special Town Meeting